

# Tale Feathers

March  
2008

Volume 75  
Number 2

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....and MORE!!

Be sure to visit our  
website to  
get any new info  
after publication.

## ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>

*Jeffrey Wells, Ph.D., Senior Scientist for the Boreal Songbird Initiative*



We are pleased to announce our 2008 Annual Awards Dinner will be hosted at Orlando Gardens at 4300 Hoffmeister Avenue in Lemay on Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. Awards will be presented for Conservationist of the Year, Educator of the Year and Volunteer of the Year. The evening will conclude with a talk from our keynote speaker, Jeffrey Wells, Ph.D., Senior Scientist for the International Boreal Conservation Campaign and Boreal Songbird Initiative.

Recently, you may have read about the Society's efforts to assist with conservation work in Central America aimed at the wintering grounds of migrating birds that we observe in Missouri. This is critically important as some 255 species of songbird migrate *from North to Central or South America*. Further, only a very small percentage of these neotropical migrants that we observe in Missouri actually breed in the state. Many of them only *pass through* in the Spring and Fall to/from their nesting grounds far to the north—largely including the Boreal Forest.

Dr. Wells, author of the *Birder's Conservation Handbook: 100 North American Birds at Risk* from Princeton University Press in 2007, will deliver the keynote address on the state of birds and bird conservation in North America. His wide-ranging presentation will cover everything from global warming to lingerie, Kleenex, donut holes, and the Argentinean economy. Dr. Wells will offer his secrets of bird conservation and describe some amazing opportunities that still exist including protection of the Boreal Forest—North America's Great Bird Nursery.

(continued on page 4 and 5)

(Also check our website: [www.stlouisaudubon.org](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org))  
(White Crowned sparrow picture by Mike Grant)

## St. Louis Audubon Society

# Opportunities and Announcements

## Mission Statement of The St. Louis Audubon Society

Help our community  
sustain biological  
Diversity through  
Nature.

Goals  
To foster an aware-  
ness and under-  
standing  
of birds and other  
wildlife and their  
habitats

To educate our com-  
munity so people  
can make  
informed decisions  
about the natural  
world.

## Encore Presentation at Powder Valley Nature Center

Walter Liddell, former St. Louis Audubon Society Board Director and long time member, will once again be the March Hallway Exhibit artist at Powder Valley Nature Center. The primary emphasis of the exhibition is birds but other animals, insects and scenic photographs from 4 continents will be included.

In spring, 1957, a pair of robins built a nest in a small pine tree in Walt Liddell's front yard. Over the course of a few weeks, Walt made a complete photographic record of the activities around the nest. Walt shot pictures in both black and white and color. One of his black and white pictures finished in the top 20 in a national competition and one of the color pictures was judged "Slide of the Year" by the St. Louis Camera Club.

Those pictures changed the entire course of Walt's photographic activity. Over the next 50 years, Walt has taken thousands of pictures of birds and other wildlife throughout the world. He has sold pictures to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and national and international publications to illustrate articles on birds and other wildlife. Walt has also exhibited in numerous local galleries.

Walt feels strongly that wildlife of the world should be managed and protected for future generations to enjoy. Because of this belief, he has affiliated himself with local and national organizations dedicated to preserving our wildlife heritage.

## CONSERVATION FOR CRITTERS

The fifth annual Conservation For Critters is scheduled for Sunday, March 9, 2008 from 9 am – 4 pm at Kirkwood Community Center. The goal of this event is to educate the general public about wildlife and conservation by creating a family-oriented event with numerous exhibits, some live animals, and hands-on activities for children.

Kids can view and touch live animals, ask questions of wildlife experts, collect educational materials to take home and participate in a variety of activities including crafts, a scavenger hunt, face-painting, balloon animals and magic tricks.

Byron Von Rosenberg, local author of *I Don't Want To Kiss A Llama* will show his children's books.

Other participants include the St. Louis Herpetological Society, Audubon Society, World Bird Sanctuary, Wild Canid Survival Center, Wildlife Center of Missouri, St. Louis Zoo, Crown Ridge Tiger Sanctuary, Friends In The Wild and many more.

Admission is \$3.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children under 10. Concessions will be available. For more information call Karen Lucy at 636-461-2818 or Sue Leahy at 314-962-2318 or e-mail [sleahy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sleahy@sbcglobal.net)

## Beginner Walks in Forest Park

Bird walks in Forest Park will resume on Saturday, April 5 from 8:30 to 10:30 am. Meet at the Education & Visitor's Center at 8:15am. Please contact Anne Grossman at (314) 367-7275 x-14 or email [agrossman@forestparkforever.org](mailto:agrossman@forestparkforever.org)

***Talefeathers***  
**Newsletter going Electronic**  
**THIRD NOTICE**

The St. Louis Audubon Society has decided to join many other organizations and move to electronic newsletters. This move will take place in mid-2008 at which time we will discontinue the full distribution of the printed *Talefeathers* as you have known it. We are doing this to save cost, the volunteer time involved in putting out the paper version and the uncertainty of the scheduling of the printing company and postal services. This should avoid the problem that we have had of newsletters arriving at your homes after an announced event has already been held. In addition, the electronic form will give us the flexibility to send out occasional short newsletters when items of special interest come up. From an environmental standpoint this switch will also save the paper on which 2500+ newsletters are printed.

In order for you to receive your electronic newsletter we will need your e-mail address. As soon as possible send your e-mail address to Sue Gustafson at [smgustafson@juno.com](mailto:smgustafson@juno.com). **Please include your regular mailing address and zip code for cross checking purposes.** Sue will compile the addresses into an updateable data base.

We will mail a limited number of paper newsletters to any of our members who do not have e-mail access. This may be a much simplified version of our current *Talefeathers*. If you do not have an e-mail address and still wish to receive the newsletter you must mail a note to our post office box P.O. Box 220227, St. Louis, MO 63122.

Failure to send either your e-mail address or a specific request for continuation of a paper newsletter will result in your not receiving any newsletter. However, we will mail out the annual calendar to all of our members in August of each year. Included will be instructions for putting your e-mail address into the data base and/or requesting the paper version of *Talefeathers*.

## **March & April Birding Trips**

Pat Lueders

### **March 22, Saturday, 8:00 am—Horseshoe Lake, IL and RMBS**

Paul Bauer will lead this trip through Horseshoe Lake and RMBS. He will be looking for ducks, shorebirds, unusual gulls and early spring migrants at both locations. Come for part or all of the day. Weather at this time of the year changes and is especially cool by the lakes, so dress for all temperatures. There will be a chance to stop for lunch at a fast food place, or bring your own.

### **April 2, Wednesday, 8:00am—Columbia Bottom Conservation Area**

Pat Lueders will be leading this Wednesday trip, and we will be visiting one of our newer areas that have a variety of habitat and birds. We will meet at the new headquarters building at the entrance to the area. Depending on the weather, we will do some walking in the wooded trails. We will be hoping to find some early migrants, shorebirds, ducks and gulls. Again, dress for all weather possibilities and wear comfortable walking shoes. Bring your lunch and we will picnic, again weather permitting. We should start for home around 3:00 pm.

### **April 12, Saturday, 8:00 am—B. K. Leach Conservation Area**

John Solodar will be leading this trip to one of the most exciting areas that we bird. This conservation area is improving every year and may eventually be one of the best areas in the state. We should see a large variety of migrating birds, ducks, and shorebirds. Meeting directions will be available on the website or in the trip notice on MOBIRDS.

### **April 19, Saturday, 7:30 am—Shaw Nature Preserve**

Connie Alwood, one of the authors of *Birding in St. Louis*, will lead us through this beautiful area. The wide variety of habitats will enable us to see a large variety of migrating birds. There will be hiking throughout the preserve, so wear comfortable shoes and be dressed for cool mornings. Meet Connie at the headquarters, I-44 to the Gray Summit exit, then left ¼ mile to the entrance. There is a small fee if you aren't a member of the Botanical Garden.

**Please check our website for directions to location.**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

Dr. Wells is the Senior Scientist for the International Boreal Conservation Campaign and Boreal Songbird Initiative, Seattle-based non-profit organizations working for the conservation of North America's Boreal forest. After receiving his Ph.D. and Master's degrees in avian ecology from Cornell University, he worked for the National Audubon Society, first as Bird Conservation Director for the New York State office, then as the National Director of Bird Conservation. Dr. Wells completed the first book on Important Bird Areas in North America in 1998 when he published *Important Bird Areas in New York State*, a highly acclaimed handbook to help determine highest priority bird conservation areas for use by state and federal agencies, land trusts, and others. He has authored or co-authored hundreds of scientific papers, reports, and popular articles on birds and bird conservation. He continues as a Visiting Fellow of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

We hope you share our excitement about spending an evening with Dr. Jeffrey Wells and learning of the daunting challenges but exciting opportunities for conservation of North America's birds. Please bring your checkbook as we will provide a number of creative ways for you to personally contribute.

6:00 p.m.—Business Meeting

6:30 p.m.—Open Bar Begins Service

7:00 p.m.—Dinner Service

The business meeting is open to all, but only current SLAS members will be allowed to vote in the election of the Board of Directors. Feel free to skip the business portion and arrive during the social hour that starts at 6:30 p.m.

The cost is just \$25 per person. Reservations are required—please use the form below.

**Space is limited, so please register by April 1st** to insure you can enjoy this wonderful evening!

Orlando Gardens is at 4300 Hoffmeister Ave. in Lemay, just off I-55 south of the St. Louis City Line. Take I-55 Exit 199, Reavis Barracks Rd, East 0.1 mile to Union. Turn Left on Union and drive 0.6 mile to Hoffmeister Avenue. Turn right on Hoffmeister for 0.3 mile to Orlando's.

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### April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Annual Dinner Registration Form

**By April 1<sup>st</sup>**, please mail this form or a copy with payment to:

Mitch Leachman, 2728 Lakeport Drive, Maryland Heights, MO 63043

Make checks payable to **St. Louis Audubon Society**.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
Fee No. Total Enclosed





## The Boreal Forest Emerald Halo—Bird Nursery

*by Mitch Leachman*

The Boreal Forest ecosystem, also referred to as Taiga, is a unique mosaic of interconnected habitats including forests, lakes, wetlands and even tundra at its northern extremes. Circling the northern portion of the globe above 50 degrees latitude, it covers 2.3 million square miles and is larger than the remaining Brazilian Amazon Rain Forest. While major regions in Scandinavia and Russia have been lost or fragmented due to development, the North American Boreal Forest at 1.3 billion acres stretches from coast to coast and retains vast tracts of undisturbed wilderness. Home to large populations of grizzly bears, Woodland Caribou and wolves, it also provides breeding grounds for nearly a third of North America's land birds (including many of the Spring and Fall migrants we wait for every year) and 40% of its waterfowl.

The boreal is defined largely by the effects of life at the far northern latitudes, from 50°, at the southern edge, to 65° and beyond and in some areas to the Arctic Circle. Plants have adapted to low understory light, bitter winter colds as low as -65°C, a growing season as short as 60 days between killing frosts and low nutrient levels from the very slow decomposition at such temperatures. Conifers dominate the landscape in no small part due to their adaptation to the short growing season by performing limited photosynthesis all year long through their needles.

The North American boreal provides habitat for over 90,000 species of plants, animals and microorganisms, and is home to the world's largest caribou herd, second highest wolf population and 43 other mammal species. Of special note are the nearly 5,000 species of fungi, including several thousand species of lichens, a diversity unparalleled in the tropics or anywhere on the planet. With an environment especially suited to this taxa, lichens have radiated into many niches and have even become a vital food source for many animals including the woodland caribou. Lastly, some 300 bird species regularly breed in the boreal. Some like the white-throated sparrow spend their winters in our backyards, yet many more are Neotropical migrants and include nearly all of the wood warblers that make much longer migrations to winter in Central or South America.

Of all the bird species that utilize the boreal forest for their reproduction, three North American species are nearly completely dependent upon it. Nearly 100% of the estimated global populations of the tree-nesting Bonaparte's gull, the bog-inhabiting palm warbler and the elusive short-billed dowitcher require the boreal for their breeding. Some 35 species of birds have an estimated 80% of their Western Hemisphere breeding population in the North American boreal region. Those include species as diverse as the blackpoll and Tennessee warblers, Philadelphia vireo, dark-eyed junco, lesser yellowlegs and solitary sandpiper. Another 96 species have an estimated 50% of their Western Hemisphere breeding population in the boreal forest region. This includes a full 35 species of waterfowl and shorebirds—from the trumpeter swan to the common loon to both the hooded and common merganser. Also within this group are sixteen species of wood warblers, eight species of sparrows and four flycatchers—least, alder, yellow-bellied and olive-sided.

In spite of its beauty and ecological necessity, the North American boreal forest is under attack like never before. The modern world's—especially the United States'—insatiable appetites for paper products and energy are creating pressure to develop these forests; clearcuts, oil and gas wells, roads and hydroelectric dams are sprouting in the boreal at an accelerating pace. Approximately one million acres are lost each year to logging alone—the equivalent of a football field a minute. With less than one-tenth of Canada's boreal forest officially protected and more than one-third already allocated to industrial development, human society has yet to decide to preserve this landscape for posterity. These threats and some hopeful signs for the future will be discussed in next month's newsletter.

## *Lichens of Missouri* *You Will be Amazed!!*

March Joint Program with the Sierra Club

Mark your calendar for Thursday, March 27 at 6:45 p.m. at Schlafly Branch of St. Louis Public Library at 225 N. Euclid between Lindell & Maryland (please note the **TIME**)

With over 400 species in Missouri, lichens are all around us during our woodland hikes or birding trips. Yet, we too often pass them by for the more charismatic birds, mammals or butterflies. Having been referred to as "fungi that have discovered agriculture," lichens are composite, symbiotic organisms with representatives of at least two kingdoms. The dominant fungus partner, incapable of making its own food, cultivates either an algae or a cyanobacteria that manufactures food by photosynthesis. Extremely slow growing and able to shut down metabolically during periods of environmental extremes, lichens have been estimated to be among the oldest living organisms.

David Bruns is currently a Conservation Education Consultant for the Missouri Department of Conservation. He received his B.A. in Environmental Education from Northland College and his Masters in Environmental Studies from Montclair State University. David has taught for many organizations including the National Wildlife Federation, the National Audubon Society and the Missouri Botanical Garden. David has been studying lichens in Missouri for over 10 years and has collected and cataloged almost 100 species of lichen at Rockwoods Reservation, including one species new to Missouri. He has presented lichen education workshops for teachers and written a resource for high school level lichen ecology studies on school grounds.

This program continues a successful tradition of partnership between St. Louis Audubon and the Eastern Missouri Group of the Sierra Club. That means you will have twice the people to meet and twice the opportunities to discover. The meeting is open to all, members or not.

The Schlafly Branch of St. Louis Public Library is at 225 N. Euclid, just 1 block from the Northeast corner of Forest Park. There is a parking garage in the Library building AND (for you walkers) the Central West End MetroLink stop is just one-half mile south.

Questions, call Leslie Lihou at 314-726-2140.

## **Weekend Bootheel Trip Planned**

St. Louis Audubon Society (SLAS) is offering a weekend birding trip to the "Bootheel" of southeastern Missouri on April 26 and 27, 2008. All are welcome, members and non-members alike, although there will be a limit of 30 people overall. There is a cost of \$20 for each participant to cover expenses. After expenses, the remainder will be donated to St. Louis Audubon Society. Reservations for the trip should be made by e-mail to [joseph.w.eades@monsanto.com](mailto:joseph.w.eades@monsanto.com).

Payment should be by check. Make your check payable to Joe Eades and send it at least two weeks in advance to:

Joe Eades  
517 Willow Lane  
Kirkwood Missouri 63122

This will secure your place on the trip. A block of 20 hotel rooms has been reserved under ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY for Friday and Saturday nights, April 25 and April 26.

We will be staying at the Country Hearth Inn in Dexter, Missouri. Please make your room reservations with your individual credit card to secure a room. Reserve your room as soon as possible and let me know when you have done so. Unsecured rooms will be released 2 weeks prior to the trip. A continental breakfast (cereal, milk, coffee, juice and pastries) is included in the room rate and will be made available early on Saturday, at 5:00 am. Meet the group outside the hotel lobby at 5:30 am on SATURDAY if you are staying elsewhere. We will leave PROMPTLY thereafter. An "avant-garde" BIG DAY group may leave the hotel at 3:00 am on Saturday and meet the rest of the group at Duck Creek Conservation Area Headquarters at 6:15 am. Please let me know if you are interested in this option. SUNDAY start time will be 6:00 am.

### HOTEL INFORMATION:

Country Hearth Inn, Dexter Missouri.  
913 South Outer Road  
US 60 & One Mile Road  
Dexter, MO 63841  
(573) 624-7400

Website: <http://www.countryhearth.com/hotels/mo-dexter.asp>

Mention that you are with St. Louis Audubon for discounted rates of \$45.99 + tax for single and \$50.95 + tax for double. Failure to do so may result in a higher rate. Specify how many beds you require. Patience and attentiveness is advised as the operator may be a little difficult to understand. Make your reservations for one or both nights as you prefer. Make your reservations early.

A expanded itinerary of locations, start times and further details is posted on the St. Louis Audubon Society website.

Overall, birding should be EXCELLENT!

## Changes to By-Laws Proposed

Below, please find proposed changes to the St. Louis Audubon Society By-Laws. These have been adopted by the Board of Directors at their February meeting and are hereby submitted to the general membership for approval. The vote will be held at the Annual Awards Dinner meeting on Friday, April 11, 2008. The main changes are to allow the Society to continue to offer local-chapter-only memberships, to allow for email notification of meetings and proposed changes to vital documents, and hire paid staff. See the website ([www.stlouisaudubon.org](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org)) for the current version of the Society's By-Laws.

### Proposed Changes to St. Louis Audubon Society By-Laws

#### Article I: Membership

Section 2. Membership in the National Audubon Society shall also include membership in the St. Louis Audubon Society for those residing in Zip Codes assigned to St. Louis Audubon Society by the National Audubon Society.

Section 3. St. Louis Audubon Society may offer memberships to the local chapter only. These memberships will not include membership in the National Audubon Society.

Section 5. Membership dues shall be payable at time of application and shall be effective from the date of election, and yearly thereafter.

#### Article II: Membership Meetings

The annual meeting of the members of the Society shall be held on such date in the spring as may be determined by vote of the Board of Directors. Special meetings of the members may be called by the President or by resolution of the Board. Ten days notice of such special meetings, stating the objects thereof, shall be given to each member, except that in case any amendment to the Articles of Incorporation or these By-Laws is to be submitted, not less than thirty (30) days notice shall be given. Such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when electronically mailed or deposited in the United States mail at the member's last known address according to the records of the Society.

#### Article IV: Officers

Section 5. The Secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings of the Society and of the Board of Directors, send notices of all Board meetings, and perform such other duties as the President of the Board may direct. All minutes shall be placed in a Minutes Book and be kept in perpetuity, and be available to the Board of Directors for reference.

#### Insert Article XV: Paid Staff

The Board of Directors may hire and terminate paid staff as it determines appropriate. The staff will report to the Board of Directors.

#### Renumber Articles XV – XIX to XVI - XX

#### Article XX: Amendments to By-Laws

Amendments to these By-Laws shall be made as follows: The Board of Directors shall adopt a resolution setting forth the proposed amendment(s) and direct that they be submitted to a vote of the general membership by email, mail ballot, or at a meeting of the voting members. These proposed amendment(s) shall be delivered to each member at least 30 days prior to such meeting or ballot date. Such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when electronically mailed or deposited in the United States mail at the member's last known address according to the records of the Society. A two-thirds majority of votes cast is required for passage.

## *Tale Feathers*

*Tale Feathers* is published monthly by the St. Louis Audubon Society.

Messenger Printing prints 2,600 copies of each newsletter on recycled paper using soy ink. Mary Dueren edits the newsletter.

To contact the editor, call evenings to

314-576-1473 or

email: [mdueren@charter.net](mailto:mdueren@charter.net).

### **St. Louis Audubon Society 2007 - 2008**

St. Louis Audubon Society

P.O. Box 220227

Kirkwood, MO 63122

Phone: 314-822-6595

#### **Officers**

President - Torrey Berger	314-579-9227
VP Education - Vicki Flier	314-968-9166
VP Conservation - Karen Meyer	314-469-8742
VP Finance - John Solodar	314-862-5294
Treasurer - David Rogles	636-936-0660
Secretary - Linda Zurfluh	314-821-4776

#### **Board members**

Lynne Breakstone	314-726-4772
David Bruns	314-968-2091
Tom Creley	314-842-7850
Cathy Devine	314-962-3460
Mary Dueren	314-576-1473
Ann Earley	314-799-3961
Anne Rankin Horton	636-256-3402
Susan Krupa	636-405-1230
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Pat Lueders	314-961-6614
Sharon Nikl	636-391-8751
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# St. Louis Audubon Society

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[www.stlouisaudubon.org](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org)

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## ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

### *St. Louis Chapter ONLY Membership Application*

By using this Application, your membership dues will go directly to the St. Louis Audubon Society Chapter. Your membership dues will support local issues that are important to you, programs at our general meetings, and *Tale Feathers*, our newsletter.

Chapter Only Dues are \$15.00 per year and cover all members living at the same address.

Please complete the form, enclose a check payable to SLAS, and mail to:  
St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, Kirkwood, Missouri 63122.

PLEASE PRINT

Circle One.

NEW

RENEWAL

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (optional):

\_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Do Not Use This Form to Join or Renew Membership in the National Audubon Society. To join National and receive the National Audubon Magazine (as well as Tale Feathers), please contact [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) for an additional application.